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ABSTRACT

Multiage is an instructional design whereby students from two or more grades are blended together into a learning community that progresses with the same teacher(s) for two or more years. This book was designed to help teachers and administrators explore, implement, and evaluate their multiage program. The book is presented in four parts. The first three parts share a consistent format and include a series of checklists and charts for participating educators to complete. Part 1, "Exploring the Multiage Classroom," examines the multiage classroom, reasons for its implementation, and the kinds of instructional practices commonly associated with it. Part 2, "Implementing the Multiage Classroom," presents the steps involved in planning the instructional design associated with a multiage classroom. Part 3, "Evaluating the Multiage Classroom," provides assistance in establishing an evaluation process for the multiage instructional design, clarifying the elements to be evaluated and how the results should be used, shared, and reported. Part 4, "Support Pages," contains reproducible forms and sample letters, questionnaires, and surveys, ready for revision or immediate use. The final section also provides recommended resources for further information. (KB)

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THE MULTIAGE EVALUATION BOOK

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Char Forsten, Jim Grant, and Irv Richardson

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THE MULTIAGE EVALUATION BOOK

Char Forsten, Jim Grant, and Irv Richardson

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Statement from the Publisher: This book may be consumed by individual teachers or photocopied for use by study groups or multiple classrooms in the same school. This book may not be photocopied and distributed by one school to any other school within or outside of the school district.

The Multiage Evaluation Book

Written by:

Char Forsten
Jim Grant
Irv Richardson

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Susan Dunholter for her creative gift to bridge a book design with its text;

and especially to Meredith Reed, our extraordinary editor, whose writing expertise is matched in quality by her sensitive people skills.

Dedications

We warmly dedicate this book to the schools where we were teaching principals and where we learned (almost) everything we know and love about multiyear:

Dublin Consolidated School
Dublin, New Hampshire
—Char Forsten

Temple Elementary School
Temple, New Hampshire
—Jim Grant

Mast Landing School
Freeport, Maine
—Irv Richardson

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Preface

What Constitutes a Successful Evaluation Process?

"The only thing that endures over time is the law of the farm: I must prepare the ground, put in the seed, cultivate it, weed it, water it, then gradually nurture growth and development to full maturity."

—Steven Covey (1990)

In the above quotation, Steven Covey captures the essence of a successful evaluation process. As former teaching principals of schools with multiage classrooms, we are committed to helping other educators do with their programs what Covey so eloquently states about the law of a farm: develop an ongoing plan to effectively explore, implement, and assess multiage classrooms.

The exploration and implementation steps are critical, formative components, and prior to starting a multiage classroom, an understanding of both its philosophy and essential components is crucial. Once — or if — multiage classrooms are in place, an ongoing assessment or evaluation plan (the summative component) becomes critical. You continually need to evaluate progress toward your goals in order to measure, report, and use your results for improvement of your multiage practices. To extend the metaphor of the farm: You cannot just expect multiage classrooms to take root, grow strong, and bloom if you do not "cultivate, weed, water" and constantly evaluate their progress.

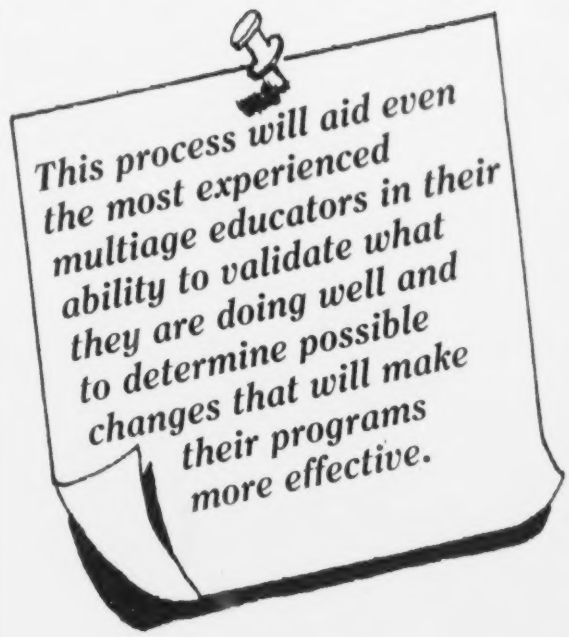
The results of your evaluation process should not only help you determine the effectiveness of your multiage classrooms, but they should also help you identify the areas that need attention or revision. What we also find exciting is that this comprehensive evaluation procedure allows both the original stakeholders and newcomers the benefit of working through the formative steps and becoming active participants in the ongoing assessment. This process will aid even the most experienced multiage educators in their ability to validate what they are doing well and to determine possible changes that will make their programs more effective. For example, a teacher discovers after reading one of the parent questionnaires that although a student's parents understand their child's academic standing, they do not

comprehend important multiage vocabulary, such as peer tutoring and learning centers. This information, in addition to other discoveries, is vital and may now be used to strengthen the parent education component of that teacher's multiage classroom.

As you read the introduction and checklists, bear in mind that it is not our intention to imply that you will succeed only if you follow our directions. Although each checklist represents what numerous, experienced multiage educators consider important for effective implementation, use the blank lines at the bottom of each checklist to customize this book to your own program.

It is also not our intention to use this book to evaluate teachers. These checklists will help identify the skills and support teachers need, but they are not meant to evaluate teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

The authors wish you well in the exploration, implementation, and evaluation of your multiage program.


This process will aid even the most experienced multiage educators in their ability to validate what they are doing well and to determine possible changes that will make their programs more effective.

About This Book

What is multiage?

Multiage is an instructional design where students from two or more grades are blended together into a learning community that progresses with the same teacher(s) for two or more years. Multiage is an environment in which teachers continuously track student progress and where relationships improve among all involved: students, teachers, and parents. Improved student attitudes and quality academic instruction and learning form the core of multiage.

The philosophy behind multiage goes beyond the physical grouping of students. For these authors, multiage classrooms are purposely heterogeneous to allow peer tutoring and modeling to take place. While a single-grade classroom contains a three-year age range of students, multiage classrooms have a range of four or more. Many feel this is a positive attribute that allows learners to work in a setting that better reflects the diverse population of the real world. To teach this wide range of students, teachers learn how to create and use flexible groups for specific instructional purposes. The goal is not to cover curriculum, but to build independent learners who can achieve their personal best.

What makes multiage so complex?

First, multiage is often confused with combination or split-grade configurations in which two or more classrooms combine into one. Unfortunately, too often teachers discover that their classrooms are labeled "multiage" when in fact they are one of these other groupings. This fundamental mistake occurs when the reasons for creating the classroom (e.g., overcrowding, lack of teachers) are not grounded in multiage philosophy. In addition, when teachers have not been trained in multiage practices or have not been helped to understand the value of multiage classrooms, the direction is lost.

Second, change is a process, not an event. Like the farmer planting his crop, educators cannot just implement multiage one day and expect to come in the next and find the philosophy understood and the practices working smoothly. One must first understand the philosophy, must have the will and skill to implement the necessary changes, and must recognize and use the reconfigured time to its greatest capacity. It must matter to the teacher before the teacher can make it matter to others.

Why is there so much interest in multiage classrooms?

Today's educational standards demand much from both teachers and students, and educators are increasingly confronted with the "quality v. quantity" debate. In multiage instruction, quality outweighs quantity in that it allows teachers more learning time with students in a real-world setting. Perhaps the most important and most satisfying benefit of multiage instruction, however, is the long-term relationships that teachers, students, and their families develop to better meet the needs of individual learners.

How does *The Multiage Evaluation Book* differ from other books on multiage practices?

Numerous requests have been made for a comprehensive book that evaluates multiage and looping classrooms. *The Multiage Evaluation Book*, like its companion *The Looping Evaluation Book*, is designed to help you assess and evaluate each step you take toward implementation, from the formative to the evaluative stages. This is the first book to provide a sequential, hands-on, step-by-step approach, written to help you identify and consider all the factors that will eventually lead to a healthy, thriving multiage classroom. Special features include:

- Checklists
- Support Pages
- Rationale behind the chosen process
- Prescribed goals
- Individual/team goals
- Consequences of skipping a step
- Space to write the current principal's name
- Sources you have used in your process
- Space to write your plan
- Space for notes or comments for future reference

Why is evaluation critical to success?

How will you know if your multiage classroom is working if you do not evaluate its progress? How will you bring on board new staff members and stakeholders? What will you say if someone asks you to quantify the success of your multiage classroom? How will you improve your existing practices and revise them when needed? What staff development, training, and resources are needed for continued success? Answers to these and other questions can be established through an effective evaluation process. A thorough procedure is critical to success when it helps you understand why you are pursuing specific goals, how you might best achieve them, and, finally, how to monitor, report, and use your results for continual improvement.

A WORD TO THE WISE

Do not look for "mastery" in multiage practices; instead, strive for what one might label "fluency" in its use. Mastery implies something finished, completed, and out-of-the-way. Fluency allows for ongoing learning and refinement to ensure that multiage classrooms reflect any necessary growth and change. Remember: the journey is the destination.

How will this book help you evaluate your multiage classroom(s)?

Are you currently exploring multiage practices? Are you already implementing this instructional design and attempting to improve, troubleshoot, or evaluate its effectiveness? Are you ready to expand its use in your school or district, but need a process to bring new stakeholders on board?

This hands-on book is designed to help you look ahead at what needs to be done and to record your steps and experiences throughout your evaluation process. As such, both the past and the future are considered in today's decision-making process. This book will guide you step-by-step along your multiage journey. It provides ample opportunities for you to consider, plan, evaluate, and record your reflections and experiences. Too often the history behind an individual school's reform effort is lost when the stakeholders retire or leave the system. This guide will help keep your information organized, and if those original stakeholders should leave, it will ensure that the process has been preserved for future reference.

Who should use this book?

- Individual teachers, principals, and other educators
- Study groups
- Teacher teams

How to Use This Book

Physical Layout

There are four parts to this book. The first three share a consistent format and include a series of checklists and charts for participating educators to complete. The fourth part contains sample reproducible forms, letters, questionnaires, and surveys, ready for revision or immediate use. This final section also provides recommended resources where you can locate further information on specific multiage topics.

The four parts are:

Part One: Exploring Multiage
Part Two: Implementing Multiage
Part Three: Evaluating Multiage
Part Four: Support Pages

Write or Photocopy?

This book can be used in different ways, depending on your own unique situation. Below are two suggestions.

1. Write directly in the book as you work through the evaluation process. This method is effective if you are working individually or as part of a two-or-more-person team. If a large number of teachers will be part of the evaluation process, it might be most effective for each individual teacher to have his or her own copy of the book. (Multiple copies are available at a discount.) This option might be more efficient than photocopying and collating all of the checklists and charts for a large number of teachers.
2. Photocopy and collate the checklists, charts, and activities for teachers or study team members (from one school only) to use. For this scenario, we recommend that a principal or team leader photocopy and collate the checklists and charts in Parts One and Two of the book to give to teachers and/or other members of the study group for their response. Part Three, "Evaluating The Multiage Classroom," can be used or photocopied by the principal or team leader to record and assess the results for the entire group.

Getting Started

The Multiage Evaluation Book is a workbook that can be consumed by individual teachers or photocopied for use by study groups or multiple classrooms in the same school. Decide which of the methods described above is appropriate for you.

Next, consider your reasons for completing this evaluation process. Take some time to read through the entire book. If none of the suggested circumstances fits, write your own in the spaces provided on each checklist. Consider the statements below as you review the checklists:

I/We:

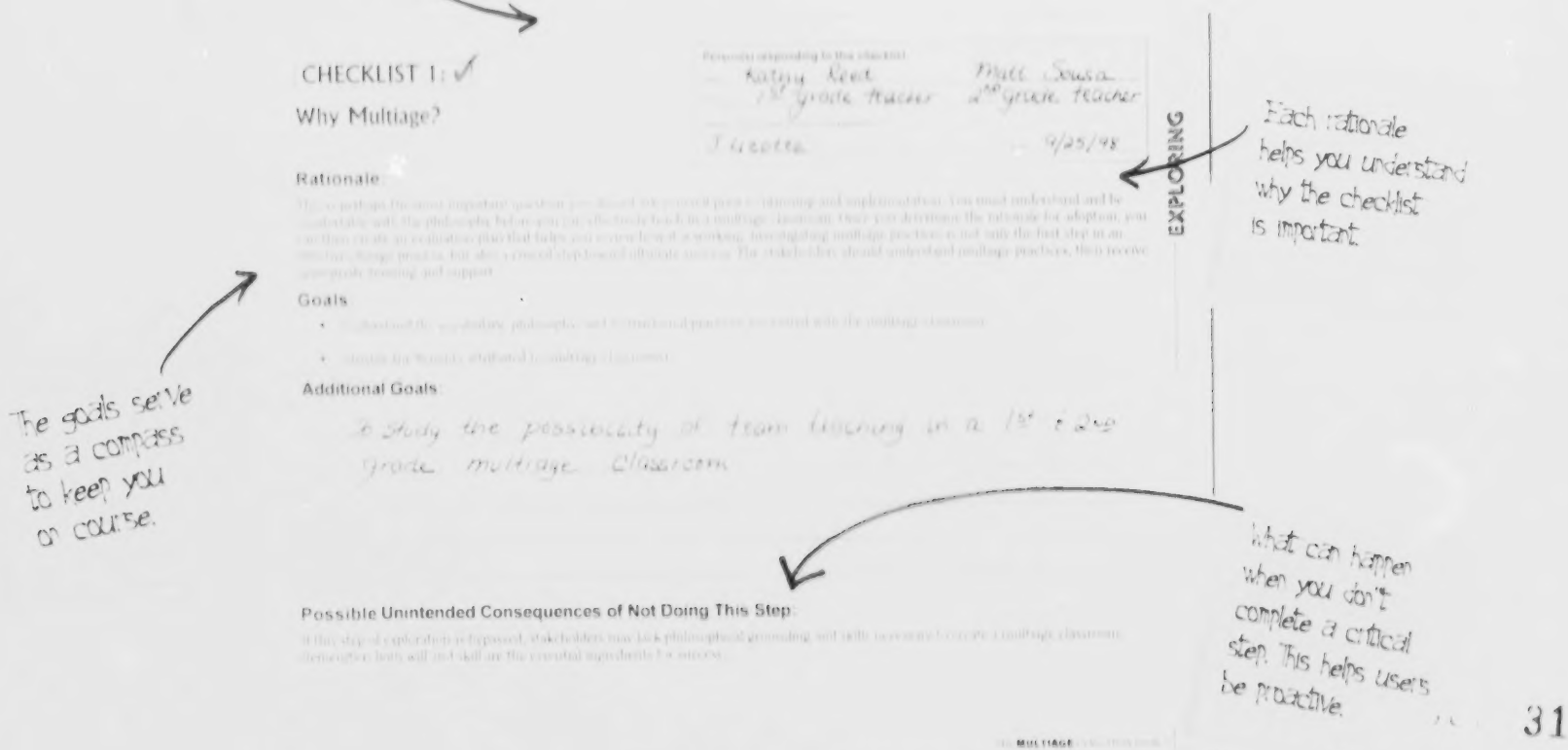
are investigating multiage classrooms and would like to follow a logical process.

will be implementing multiage classrooms and want to take appropriate steps toward creating a successful program.

are currently implementing multiage classrooms and are troubleshooting to determine the source(s) of our problems and how we might address them.

are currently implementing multiage classrooms and want to develop an ongoing evaluation process that will allow for continual training and improvement.

Each checklist has space for the user(s) to record his/her name, position, and date.



Each rationale helps you understand why the checklist is important.

The goals serve as a compass to keep you on course.

What can happen when you don't complete a critical step. This helps users be proactive.

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CHECKLIST 1: ✓ Why Multiage?

Directions: Examine and respond to the statements in the following checklist. Check appropriate responses a use the key at the bottom of this page to help you decide which column best reflects your current situation

I/We understand:	YES	SOME	NO	SUPPORT PAGES
1) the research and vocabulary associated with multiage practices and know the difference between multiage and combination/split-grade classrooms		KR ms ✓		62-63 77-85
2) the advantages (benefits) and disadvantages associated with multiage practices and how they pertain to my/our own setting		KR ms ✓		77-86
3) effective management and instructional strategies used in multiage classrooms		KR ms ✓		79-85 86
4) the role of themes and centers in the multiage classroom	KR ✓	ms ✓		62 79-85 86
5) the importance of using flexible grouping strategies	KR ✓	ms ✓		62 86 79-85 86
6) the use of alternative assessment/evaluation techniques utilized in the multiage classroom		KR ms ✓		62 86 79-85 86
Additional statements of understanding are:				
7) Effective Team Teaching Strategies in a Multiage Classroom		ms KR ✓		
8)				

KEY

Great! You have a working knowledge of multiage practices. Proceed to Checklist 2.

Further study strongly recommended. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Futher study necessary. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Each checklist has statements for your consideration that help you determine your level of preparedness.

Support pages guide you to helpful resources.

The key helps you determine if you need further study.

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CHECKLIST 1: ✓ How Did You Learn About Multiage Classrooms?

Directions: Identify the sources for your exploration step in the chart below.

EXPLORING

Books, Research, Articles, and Studies:	School/Classroom Visitations:	"Chatrooms" Web Site/Interview:	Conferences, Seminars, In-Service, Workshops:	Audiotapes, Videos, Other:
Books multiage Handbook	Visited 1-2 multiage Classrooms North Shore Elementary October 3rd		Kathy > Introduction to multiage - SDE Kathy - Strategies For multiage classroom	Ellen Thompson video - A Day In a multiage classroom
Books multiage Handbook Children of the Center multiage Q & A	↓	Teachernet.com	↓	↓
Creating the multiage Classroom	"		↓	↓
multiage and more	"	Talked with 2nd grade teacher at North Shore	"	"
"	"		Strategies	"
"	"			

Charts allow you space to record your findings or action plans.

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CHECKLIST 1: ✓

Assess your understanding of multiage practices, then respond

1. I/We are satisfied with our exploration of multiage practices: Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further investigation is needed: Yes ✓ No ___

Plan to gain further experience in multiage practices. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

To better understand Team Teaching
① We will schedule a visit to George Washington Elementary School where there are three teams of teachers implementing multiage classrooms ② We will begin to team teach some classes together during afternoon social studies block ③ We will do the following activities. 1 attend a 2 day seminar on multiage practices 2 Begin to implement flexible groups during reading instruction 3 create rubrics to assess our student writing

Journal Entry/Notes

The Multiage Handbook was especially helpful to us during the exploration stage We plan to use it as an ongoing resource throughout our evaluation process

Write your own customized plan for each checklist after assessing your status.

Each checklist provides a space to record important notes for future reference.

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PART ONE: EXPLORING THE MULTIAGE CLASSROOM

EXPLORING

Checklist ✓ 1. Why Multiage? A Multiage Philosophy Review.

Checklist ✓ 2. Is a Multiage Classroom Right for You?

Checklist ✓ 3. Is Your School Environment Conducive to Multiage Practices? How Graded Is Your Classroom/School?

"To what end?...is always a good question to ask before the start of any major project."

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Exploring multiage education is the first step toward its effective implementation. Both will and skill are necessary ingredients for success. Too often, we address only the skills needed by educators and avoid or forget that it must matter to us before we can make it matter to others. As Abraham Lincoln said, "Will springs from the two elements of moral sense and self-interest."

Whether you are just beginning your exploration of multiage or you are troubleshooting or refining your own classroom, the exploration stage should help you understand what multiage is and isn't, the reasons for its implementation, and the kinds of instructional practices commonly associated with it.

Directions for Part One:

1. Review the checklists and activities. If you are an experienced multiage educator, this is still an important exercise to include in your overall evaluation process.

2. Next, fill in the names and roles of persons completing each checklist.

3. Read the rationale, goal statements, and consequences that correspond to each checklist. Add any additional goals of your own. Goals should be realistic and attainable.

4. Complete the checklists and activities to assess your current situation.

5. Evaluate your readiness (or effectiveness, if already implementing multiage) for this step toward creating a successful multiage classroom.

6. If needed, create a plan for further exploration. The support pages (pp. 59-86) at the end of this book are included to direct you to helpful information.

Refer to "How to Use This Book" (p. xvi) for a completed sample checklist.

CHECKLIST 1: ✓

Why Multiage?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

•Name of principal at time of exploration:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

This is perhaps the most important question you should ask yourself prior to planning and implementation. You must understand and be comfortable with the philosophy before you can effectively teach in a multiage classroom. Once you determine the rationale for adoption, you can then create an evaluation plan that helps you review how it is working. Investigating multiage practices is not only the first step in an effective change process, but also a crucial step toward ultimate success. The stakeholders should understand multiage practices, then receive appropriate training and support.

Goals:

- Understand the vocabulary, philosophy, and instructional practices associated with the multiage classroom
- Identify the benefits attributed to multiage classrooms

Additional Goals:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

If this step of exploration is bypassed, stakeholders may lack philosophical grounding and skills necessary to create a multiage classroom. Remember, both will and skill are the essential ingredients for success.

43

42

CHECKLIST 1: ✓ Why Multiage?

Directions: Examine and respond to the statements in the following checklist. Check appropriate responses and use the key at the bottom of this page to help you decide which column best reflects your current situation.

I/We understand:	YES	SOME	NO	SUPPORT PAGES
1) the research and vocabulary associated with multiage practices and know the difference between multiage and combination/split-grade classrooms.				62-63 77-85
2) the advantages (benefits) and disadvantages associated with multiage practices and how they pertain to my/our own setting.				77-86
3) effective management and instructional strategies used in multiage classrooms.				79-85, 86
4) the role of themes and centers in the multiage classroom.				79-85, 86
5) the importance of using flexible grouping strategies.				62, 79-85, 86
6) the use of alternative assessment/evaluation techniques utilized in the multiage classroom.				62, 79-85, 86
Additional statements of understanding are:				
7)				
8)				

44

45

KEY:

Great! You have a working knowledge of multiage practices. Proceed to Checklist 2.

Further study strongly recommended. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Further study necessary. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

CHECKLIST 1: ✓ How Did You Learn About Multiage Classrooms?

Directions: Identify the sources for your exploration step in the chart below.

Books, Research, Articles, and Studies:	School/Classroom Visitations:	"Chatrooms" Web Site/Interview:	Conferences, Seminars, In-Service Workshops:	Audiotapes, Videos, Other:

CHECKLIST 1: ✓

Assess your understanding of multiage practices, then respond.

1. I/We are satisfied with our exploration of multiage practices: Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further investigation is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan to gain further experience in multiage practices. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 2: ✓

Is a Multiage Classroom Right for You?

Person(s) responding to this checklist

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of exploration: _____

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

Is a multiage classroom right for you? Now that you are familiar with the rationale, philosophy, and practices associated with multiage classrooms, it is strongly recommended that you arrange opportunities to observe and try some of them first-hand. This step not only helps you make the decision about whether or not to create a multiage classroom, but it can also help determine staff development and/or training needs that are critical for success.

Goal(s):

- Gain first-hand experience in multiage practices to determine whether or not teaching in a multiage classroom is right for you
- Determine staff development and/or training needs to create the multiage classroom

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

Teaching in a multiage setting requires skills and strategies that address a classroom where two or more conventional grades are blended into one class. Many teachers would agree they lack the time to effectively teach a single grade curriculum. Without the knowledge and experience of specific instructional strategies that work in multiage settings, teachers could end up trying to teach two or three separate curricula to two or three separate grades. This leads to potential teacher burnout and an unsuccessful multiage classroom experience, which results in a negative community reaction.

CHECKLIST 2: ✓ Is a Multiage Classroom Right for You?

Directions: Examine and respond to the statements in the following checklist.

I/We have:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO	*SUPPORT PAGES*
1) traded places with colleagues to experience working with other ages and grade levels to observe curriculum being taught and the social/emotional development of students.				N/A
2) created temporary team teaching opportunities with teachers at other grade levels to experience working with multiple grades.				63
3) assessed my classroom management strategies and discipline procedures for their effectiveness in a multiage setting.				86
4) tried using integrated, thematic instruction for one or more units of study and have set up one or more learning centers in my classroom.				62, 86
5) tried using flexible grouping strategies with my students.				62, 86
6) tried measuring student progress using authentic assessment and evaluation strategies.				62, 86
Additional desired experiences are:				
7)				
8)				

KEY:

☐ **Great!** Your experiences will help you decide if the multiage classroom is right for you. Proceed to Checklist 3.

Further study strongly recommended. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Further study necessary. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

CHECKLIST 2: ✓ How Have You Actively Explored Multiage Practices?

Directions: This chart corresponds with the checklist on the previous page. Briefly record your experiences or comments in the spaces below.

Which Practices Were Tried?	With Whom?	When?	What Was Learned?

CHECKLIST 2: ✓

Assess your experiences and observations, then respond below.

1. I/We are satisfied with our understanding of multiage practices: Yes ___ No ___
   Somewhat ___

2. Further experience is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan to gain further experience in multiage practices. Be sure to include who will do which activities and the date by which they are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 3: ✓

Is Your School Environment Conducive to Multiage Practices? How Graded Is Your Classroom/School?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of exploration: _____

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

Before you implement multiage, it is imperative that you determine if your school environment is conducive to this change. First, assess your room for gradedness. This will help you determine how easily you can blend two or more grades into one classroom of learners, which most teachers and administrators agree is the number one obstacle to creating multiage classrooms. When there are no alternatives to the grade-specific requirements in a school, some teachers choose to practice multiage in a team teaching situation, a modified multiage grouping, or a single grade looping configuration instead.

Goal(s):

- Create and implement a multiyear continuous progress classroom where all children achieve a high level of success
- Eliminate/reduce a dependency on age-/grade-specific practices

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

You do not get multiage simply by calling it multiage. Lack of teacher preparation and/or an unsuitable environment frequently leads to frustration and discontinuation of the practice.

When you complete this checklist, any items checked in the shaded areas indicate potential obstacles to multiage. Many practices indigenous to the graded structure may not easily be eliminated due to local, state, county, and federal policies. Achieving less gradedness or having a minimal number of grade-specific elements may be a more realistic and attainable goal.

CHECKLIST 3: ✓ How Graded Is Your Classroom/School?

Directions: Examine the statements below, then record your responses on the corresponding checklist to the right.

	In my/our school:
1)	curriculum content is age-/grade-specific.
2)	students' academic performance, behavior, and work habits are evaluated using comparative reporting (A, B, C, D, & F).
3)	students are assessed with a grade-specific group standardized test.
4)	students are held accountable to age-/grade-specific standards.
5)	curriculum content is time-bound (i.e., content must be taught in 36 weeks).
6)	students qualify for special education service based on having a grade level discrepancy.
7)	students qualify for reading assistance based on a grade level designation (i.e., only first-graders may receive reading support services).
8)	art, music, and PE are taught to separate grades.
9)	field trips are budgeted and planned for single grade levels.
10)	lunch and recess are scheduled according to single grade assignments.
11)	promotion standards are based solely on grade level proficiency.
	Graded practices currently used in our room/school:
12)	

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KEY:

☐ **Great!** Your graded elements will not be an obstacle to creating the multiage classroom.

Further study strongly recommended. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Further study necessary. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

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CHECKLIST 3: ✓

Not true for my/our classroom/school	I/We are presently working to change this graded practice	Somewhat true for my/our classroom	True for my/our classroom/ school	State/federal/country mandates/requirements (No choice at this time)	Local school system mandates/requirements (No choice at this time)	COMMENTS

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CHECKLIST 3: ✓

Assess the "gradedness" of your classroom, then respond below:

1. I/We have assessed and planned for the graded obstacles we face: Yes ___ No ___
   Somewhat ___
2. Further ungrading and planning are needed: *Yes ___ No ___

Plan to address grade-specific obstacles when creating multiage classrooms. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

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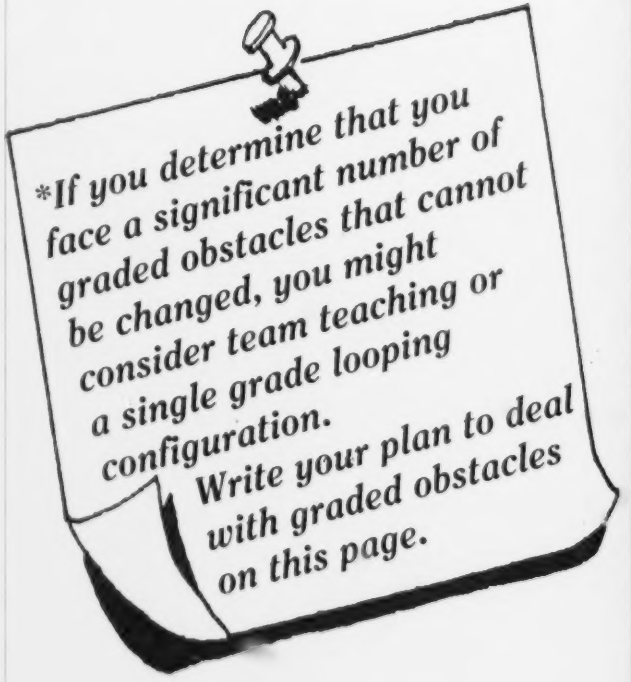
*If you determine that you face a significant number of graded obstacles that cannot be changed, you might consider team teaching or a single grade looping configuration.
Write your plan to deal with graded obstacles on this page.

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PART TWO: IMPLEMENTING THE MULTIAGE CLASSROOM

IMPLEMENTING

Designing Your Own Multiage Classroom:

Checklist ✓ 4. Who Needs to Know? Who Has the Expertise?

Checklist ✓ 5. What Are Your Goals?

Checklist ✓ 6. What Are the Essential Components of the Multiage Classroom?

Preparing to Start Your Multiage Classroom:

Checklist ✓ 7. Which Management and Teaching Strategies Will You Incorporate?

Checklist ✓ 8. What Are the Common Obstacles and Pitfalls?

Beginning Your Multiage Classroom:

Checklist ✓ 9. How Do You Get Off to a Good Start?

"There is no single right model or recipe for becoming a multiage school: Each school exists in a unique context that must be carefully considered in planning. The teachers, parents, and students who live and work in the environment are in the best position to reflect on the needs of their school. Their direct involvement is essential."

Bruce Miller, 1994

Implementing a multiage classroom requires careful planning. As Bruce Miller's quotation states, there is no one correct way to create multiage classrooms. In addition, you need to examine your own school culture, support system, and physical space, as well as consider your school's teaching, parent, and student populations to decide what will work best for everyone.

In Part Two, the steps that lead to successful implementation of multiage practices are arranged in checklist form for you to follow. This implementation section guides you through the critical steps multiage educators consider or take when planning their own instructional design. If you are preparing to start multiage classrooms, this step is essential. If you are already implementing multiage practices, it is recommended that you review and respond to these checklist activities as part of your evaluation process.

Directions for Part Two:

1. Fill in the names and positions of persons completing each checklist.

2. Read the rationale, goal statements, and potential consequences behind each checklist. Add any additional goals of your own. Goals should be realistic and attainable.

3. Complete the checklists and chart activities to assess your current situation.

4. Create a plan to do more extensive planning for the implementation stage of the multiage classroom. Refer to the support pages (pp. 59-86) for resources that will provide information on related multiage topics.

Refer to "How to Use This Book" (p. xvi) for a completed sample checklist.

CHECKLIST 4: ✓

Who Needs to Know?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of implementation:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

This checklist will help you consider who has the expertise and/or authority to make decisions in regard to implementation of the multiage classroom. It will also help you identify and plan a notification and/or education process for those who need to know about it. Many people are affected directly or indirectly by the decision to implement multiage, and the program's initial success can depend on when and how stakeholders are informed.

Goal(s):

- Determine who has the expertise and/or authority to make decisions about multiage
- Determine who will be affected by your decision to implement multiage

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

If you have not considered who has the expertise and authority to make decisions about multiage, you might find that you lack the necessary support to proceed. When you do not consider who needs to be informed about your plans, you might discover that misunderstanding has become a major obstacle to your progress. Failing to plan for this step can translate into planning to fail.

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CHECKLIST 4: ✓ Who Needs to Know?

Directions: Consider who needs to be educated, informed, and/or notified about the multiage classroom. Use the following two charts to assess your planning for educating and notifying others about multiage.

A: I/We have determined:	
1)	who is responsible for making the decision(s) about multiage.
2)	who has the expertise and knowledge to make good decisions about multiage.
3)	who is responsible for the implementation of iage.
4)	who in the building and/or school system will be affected by this decision.

B: I/We have determined how the following groups will be educated, informed, and/or notified, if they are not already involved in this process:	
5)	staff within the school (i.e., principal, colleagues, support staff, secretary, cafeteria personnel, volunteers, custodians, bus drivers, etc.)
6)	central office staff
7)	school board
8)	parents
9)	students
10)	community
Other individuals or groups who should be educated, informed, and/or notified about multiage:	
11)	
12)	

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CHECKLIST 4: ✓

A: Names of persons responsible for or affected by statements 1-4:

Names of persons in B: 5-12	Informed	Date(s)	Not yet informed	Action to be taken	Date(s)

Directions: Assess the status of who needs to know, then respond to the statements below.

1. I/We have assessed who needs to be educated, informed, and/or notified about my/our multiage classroom(s): Yes ___ No ___

2. Further planning is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan to provide information for those who need to know about multiage. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 5: ✓

What Are Your Goals?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of implementation:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

Why are you implementing the multiage classroom? You must consider and state your goals prior to implementation and evaluation.

Goal(s):

- Review the benefits of the multiage classroom
- Write goal statements for the multiage classroom

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

If you do not establish why you are implementing multiage, how will you know if it is working effectively? If you do not predetermine goals, how will you know what to assess and evaluate? Consequences of not writing goals might include termination of multiage practices (because no one knows if it is working), or unsuccessful, ineffective multiage classrooms (because an ongoing evaluation process for improvement is lacking).

CHECKLIST 5: ✓ What Are Your Goals?

Directions: Review the list of benefits below. These are more likely to occur when you establish them first as goals; you can then plan how to best achieve and measure them, and provide ongoing improvement opportunities. After reviewing the goals (benefits), decide which ones you will include in your plan, then add your own to the bottom of this list. Use the chart on the next page to record your baseline data.

I/We hope to achieve a/an:	
1)	reduction in grade level retentions.
2)	reduction in special education and remediation referrals.
3)	reduction in discipline problems.
4)	increase in students' average daily attendance.
5)	improvement in individual academic performance.
6)	increase in the percentage of parent involvement.
7)	increase in the amount of instructional time, gained through eliminating the start-of-school redundancy.
8)	improvement in students' independent learning and study skills.
9)	more integrated, continuous progress curriculum.
Additional goal statements are:	
10)	
11)	
12)	

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CHECKLIST 5: ✓

Directions: Check the **Not at This Time** or the **Yes** column to indicate which goals you hope to achieve through implementing the multiage classroom. Research the current baseline data for each goal. (Check with the administrative office for numerical baseline data, or write descriptions of the current situation for non-numerical baseline information.)

Not at This Time	Yes	Baseline Data/Description	Source (numerical, anecdotal/observational)

CHECKLIST 5: ✓

Directions: **Assess your goals and the available baseline data, then respond to the statements below.**

1. I/We have established current goals for the multiage classroom(s): Yes ___ No ___

2. Further goal setting and gathering of baseline data are needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan for establishing goals and gathering baseline data/information. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 6: ✓

What Are the Essential Components of the Multiage Classroom?

Person(s) responding to this checklist

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of implementation: _____

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

There are specific components that need to be considered when creating your multiage classroom(s). These are the nuts and bolts that need to be in place and adjusted prior to starting.

Goal(s):

- Identify and plan for critical components in the multiage classroom
- Determine a student selection process
- Determine parent involvement in the selection process
- Plan how curriculum will be addressed
- Consider how materials and physical classroom space will be utilized

Additional Goal(s):

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

With insufficient preparation, implementing a multiage classroom might be an unsuccessful experience. Sometimes we overlook the more obvious yet most essential components in the implementation process. The items in Checklist 6 are critical starting points in your planning.

CHECKLIST 6: ✓ What Are the Essential Components of the Multiage Classroom?

Directions: Examine the statements listed below, then add your own essential components. Record your responses to this checklist on the corresponding chart on the next page.

I/We have planned:
1) which ages and/or grades will be blended in the multiage classroom(s).
2) which teachers and support staff members will teach in the multiage classroom(s).
3) how students will be selected for the multiage classroom(s).
4) how parents will be involved in the multiage classroom process.
5) what materials/resources are needed for effective implementation.
6) which physical classroom space(s) will be used for the multiage classroom(s).
7) how to implement the curriculum in the multiage classroom(s).
Additional components are:
8)
9)
10)

KEY:

☐ **Great!** You have considered the essential multiage components. Continue with your implementation. Before proceeding to Checklist 7, complete the chart on the next page.

Further planning for essential multiage components necessary. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Further study necessary. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

CHECKLIST 6: ✓

Yes	Describe Specific Components:	Not at This Time	Refer to Support Pages:
			68-69, 86
			68-69, 86
			64, 65, 68-69, 86
			64, 65, 66, 67, 71-75, 84, 85
			68-69, 86
			68-69, 86
			68-69, 86

Directions: Assess the status of your planning for the components of your multiage classroom, then respond below:

1. I/We have assessed and planned for the components necessary for effective implementation of the multiage classroom(s): Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further planning is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan for the essential components for the multiage classroom. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

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CHECKLIST 7: ✓

Which Management and Teaching Strategies Will You Incorporate?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of implementation: _____

Date: _____

Rationale:

A multiage classroom requires that instructional and management strategies support a diverse range of learners. In addition, a multiage classroom is one in which cooperation, interdependence, and independence are nurtured and reinforced. Teaching in such a room requires specific staff development training in the strategies listed in Checklist 7. It cannot be assumed that a teacher has the time and skills to learn these "on the job."

Goal(s):

- Assess teacher training needs in multiage classroom management techniques
- Assess teacher training needs in multiage classroom instructional strategies

Additional Goal(s):

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

Without appropriate staff development or training, teachers might find themselves lacking in the skills necessary to teach in a multiage setting. This leads to teacher and student frustration, and an unsuccessful multiage experience.

CHECKLIST 7: ✓ Which Management and Teaching Strategies Will You Incorporate?

Directions: Examine the statements below, then record your responses on the corresponding chart on the next page.

I/We have planned for these management and teaching strategies:		
1) a positive, cooperative discipline approach		
2) learning centers		
3) classroom rules and routines		
4) integrated and thematic instruction		
5) grouping variations:	large group instruction cooperative learning individual work	flexible grouping
6) multiple intelligence theory		
7) technology use		
8) team teaching		
9) authentic assessment/evaluation		
10) hands-on math and science		
11) process writing		
12) literature-based reading		
13) cross-age tutoring		
Additional strategies are:		
14)		
15)		

Key

☐ **Great!** Your teaching and management strategies align with multiage philosophy.

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Further staff development and training will be helpful for success.

Further staff development and training will be necessary for successful implementation.

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CHECKLIST 7: ✓

Yes	In Process	Not at This Time	Refer to Support Pages:	Comments:
			79-86	
			79-86	
			79-86	
			79-86	
			62, 79-86	
			79-86	
			82-83, 85	
			63, 78	
			62, 78	
			78, 80, 81	
			78, 80, 81	
			78, 80, 81	
			78	

CHECKLIST 7: ✓

Directions: Assess the status of your training and preparedness for the management and teaching strategies you will incorporate, then respond below.

1. I/We have assessed and prepared for the management and teaching strategies to be incorporated in my/our multiage classroom(s): Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further staff development and training are needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan for future staff development and training. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 8: ✓

What Are the Common Obstacles and Pitfalls to Overcome?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of implementation:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

There are certain obstacles and pitfalls that often impede changing to a multiage classroom. An important task is to find ways to work around or eliminate these obstacles as part of your implementation process. You must understand, however, that avoiding all pitfalls might be unrealistic and unattainable.

Goal(s):

- Identify potential obstacles and pitfalls that might impede your changing to a multiage classroom
- Plan ways to avoid, minimize, or eliminate these obstacles and pitfalls

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

Reports of unsuccessful multiage experiences frequently include many of the obstacles and pitfalls cited in Checklist 8. It is important to be proactive and to plan for as many known or foreseeable obstacles as possible. It is not how quickly you become multiage, but rather how effectively. If you do not address the obstacles, you may find it extremely difficult to implement multiage classrooms and possibly lose the confidence of the stakeholders whose support is necessary for effective implementation.

CHECKLIST 8: ✓ What Are the Common Obstacles and Pitfalls to Overcome?

Directions: Examine the obstacles and pitfalls to multiage classrooms listed below, then record your responses on the corresponding chart on the next page:

I/We have considered, planned, and prepared for these potential obstacles and pitfalls:	
1)	insufficient planning for implementation and lack of timeline
2)	implementing too quickly — lack of understanding of the change process
3)	mandating multiage classrooms
4)	starting for the wrong reasons (e.g., financial, reduced student numbers, etc.)
5)	staff dissension
6)	class composition (student population) imbalance (e.g., too many special education students placed in room)
7)	curriculum that is mismatched to multiage continuous progress practices
8)	insufficient support from administrators, colleagues, parents, etc.
9)	insufficient training and ongoing staff development to support multiage practices
10)	incompatible evaluation and assessment strategies
11)	poor communication with colleagues, parents, and community members
Additional obstacles:	
12)	
13)	
14)	

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Key 104

Great! Continue with your implementation, but always be proactive when considering obstacles and pitfalls.

Further planning for obstacles and pitfalls recommended for success. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

Further planning and preparing for obstacles and pitfalls are necessary for success. See *Support Pages* for suggestions.

CHECKLIST 8: ✓

Directions: Mark the columns that best reflect your own situation, then assess your level of preparedness for implementation. Record your action plan to avoid or minimize obstacles and pitfalls you face.

Yes	In Process	Not Prepared at This Time	Refer to Support Pages:	Action Planned to Avoid or Minimize Obstacles and Pitfalls
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	
			86	

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CHECKLIST 8: ✓

Directions: Assess the common obstacles and pitfalls as they relate to your situation, then respond below:

1. I/We have assessed and planned for the obstacles and pitfalls we face at this time:
   Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further planning for these obstacles and pitfalls is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan to avoid or minimize obstacles and pitfalls to the multiage classroom. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 9: ✓

How Do You Get Off to a Good Start?

Person(s) responding to this checklist

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of implementation: _____

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

First things first! Beginnings can produce excitement and anxiety. The better prepared you are, the less you will worry. It is critical to carefully plan for the first day, week, and staff and parent meetings.

Goal(s):

- Plan for classroom "firsts"
- Plan for building/school system "firsts"

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

Without this planning, you can get caught up in the hectic "business as usual" and perhaps get off to a difficult start. First impressions are important in multiage, and getting off to a good start by planning your first day and week in the classroom, your first meeting with parents, and your first faculty meeting can have lasting positive effects.

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CHECKLIST 9: ✓ How Do You Get Off to a Good Start? What Are the Firsts?

Directions: Examine the "firsts" below, then record your responses on the corresponding chart on the next page.

I/We have planned and prepared for my/our:	Yes	In Process	Not Prepared at This Time
1) first instructional day			
2) first instructional week			
3) first parent conference/meeting			
4) first parent newsletter			
5) first open house			
6) first faculty meeting			
Additional "firsts" are:			
7)			
8)			
9)			

KEY:

Great! You are prepared for a good start

Further planning and preparation for your "firsts" will be helpful for success.
See *Support Pages* for suggestions

Further planning and preparation for your "firsts" are necessary for success.
See *Support Pages* for suggestions

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CHECKLIST 9: ✓

Brief Plan and Timeline for "Firsts":

CHECKLIST 9: ✓

Directions: Assess the status of your planning and preparation for the "firsts" in your multiage classroom, then respond:

1. I/We have assessed, planned, and prepared for the critical "firsts" for the multiage classroom(s): Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further planning and preparation are needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan for "firsts" in my/our multiage program. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

PART THREE: EVALUATING THE MULTIAGE CLASSROOM

EVALUATING

Checklist ✓ 10. What Are S.M.A.R.T. Goals?

Checklist ✓ 11. What Are the Possible Sources of Information?

Checklist ✓ 12. How Will Results of the Evaluation Process Be Used?

Checklist ✓ 13. Putting It All Together: Assessing the Steps Toward a Successful Evaluation Process

"Experience is not what happens to a man. It is what a man does with what happens to him."

—Aldous Huxley

Evaluating multiage classrooms allows you to determine what has or has not worked. Which components are working well? Which need revision or refocus? These are important questions to ask during this process. To many, however, "evaluation" implies something that needs to be completed, to get out of the way. Yet evaluation is what helps us improve, keeps us from stagnating. This section will help you establish an evaluation process for your own multiage instructional design. It will clarify which elements need to be evaluated and how the results should be used, shared, and reported.

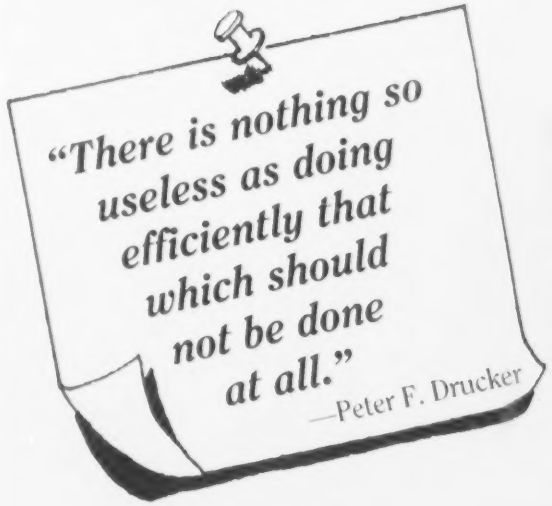
The evaluation process we recommend is as follows:

1. Review your goals
2. Select goals you want to evaluate
3. Select your sources of data
4. Develop your evaluation plan
5. Collect data
6. Analyze data
7. Consider your progress toward goals and/or revisions

Directions for Part Three:

1. Fill in the names and positions of persons completing each checklist.
2. Read the rationale, goal statements, and consequences. Add any additional goals of your own. Goals should be realistic and attainable.
3. Complete the checklists and chart activities to assess and plan your evaluation process.
4. Create a plan to fill in gaps or complete necessary steps to achieve a successful evaluation process.

Refer to "How to Use This Book" (p. xvi) for a completed sample checklist.



CHECKLIST 10: ✓

What Are S.M.A.R.T. Goals? Are Your Goals Smart?

Person(s) responding to this checklist

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of evaluation:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

Developing goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **R**ealistic, and **T**ime specific is an important step in the evaluation process. Assessment and evaluation drive what you deem important in your multiage classroom(s). For this reason, goals themselves need to be assessed for their effectiveness.

Goal(s):

- Understand the meaning of S.M.A.R.T. goals
- Assess multiage goals to see if they fit the S.M.A.R.T. criteria

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

Unrealistic goals often lead to failure. How often have you heard of goals that are unattainable or not relevant? When you assess your goals with the S.M.A.R.T. criteria, your implementation and evaluation process is based on realistic expectations and is more likely to be successful.

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CHECKLIST 10: ✓ What Are S.M.A.R.T. Goals? Are Your Goals Smart?

Directions: Refer to Checklist 5 to review your goals and to decide which goals you will assess and evaluate. Next, write the chosen goals below. Read the criteria for S.M.A.R.T. goals identified on the chart on the next page. Use the chart/checklist on the following page to assess each goal statement using the S.M.A.R.T. criteria.

Goals to assess and evaluate:
1)
2)
3)
4)
5)
6)

CHECKLIST 10: ✓ What Are S.M.A.R.T. Goals? Are Your Goals Smart?

Directions: Use the checklist below to assess each goal with the S.M.A.R.T. criteria. Begin with Goal 1 in the first column, then continue using the criteria to assess all your goals. Check each box in the column only if it is true. Leave the box blank if the goal does not meet the criteria.

	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Each goal is **Specific** ("This is what we need to do.")						
Each goal is **Measurable** ("This is how we will know we have done it.")						
Each goal is **Attainable** ("This is why I'm confident we can do it.")						
Each goal is **Relevant** and **Realistic** ("This is why it must and can/should be done.")						
Each goal is **Time** specific ("This is when we need to do it.")						

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CHECKLIST 10: ✓

Directions: Are your goals smart? Assess your results, then respond:

1. I/We are satisfied that the goal statements meet the S.M.A.R.T. criteria: Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further consideration or revision of goals is necessary: Yes ___ No ___

Revised goals or the plan to ensure they are S.M.A.R.T. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 11: ✓

What Are the Possible Sources of Information?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of evaluation:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

When collecting data for your evaluation process, there are many valuable sources to consider, including surveys, questionnaires, and attendance records. It is important to match the source of data with the type of information you need to gather. This step will help you identify your sources of information based on the goals you have established.

Goal(s):

- Identify potential sources of data or information
- Choose the sources that will assist you in evaluating each multiage goal
- Identify persons responsible for creating, distributing, and collecting sources of information

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

Smart evaluation requires smart planning. If you do not predetermine your sources of information, you might find yourself unable to measure your progress.

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CHECKLIST 11: ✓ What Are the Possible Sources of Information?

Directions: Examine the possible sources of information for your evaluation process. Decide which sources best suit each of your multiage goals that you choose from the checklists. Check each box that identifies an information source for each goal. On the next page, use the chart to determine the current status of these sources of information.

I/We will use the following information sources:	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
1) interviews						
2) surveys						
3) questionnaires						
4) journals						
5) checklists						
6) student records						
7) attendance records						
8) retention records						
9) special education referrals						
10) discipline referrals						
11) observations						
12) videotapes						
Additional sources of information are:						
13)						
14)						
15)						

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CHECKLIST 11: ✓ What Are the Possible Sources of Information?

Sources Are in Place	Person(s) Responsible	Sources Not Yet in Place	Person(s) Responsible to Have in Place	Projected Date

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CHECKLIST 11:✓

Directions: Assess the status of your data sources, then respond.

1. I/We are satisfied with the status of our data sources. Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further planning is needed for the sources of data. Yes ___ No ___

Plan to identify the sources of information needed for the evaluation process. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

CHECKLIST 12: ✓

How Will Results of the Evaluation Process Be Used?

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of evaluation:

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

Why complete the entire evaluation process if you have no plans to use or share the information? A plan for continual improvement and necessary revisions is a key reason to implement an evaluation process. The information gathered is the basis for changing or improving the existing program. By reading and completing this step you bring your multiage process full circle. It provides you with your own data for measuring and assessing the effectiveness of your multiage classroom(s).

Goal(s):

- Identify how the evaluation process results will be used
- Determine how the evaluation results will be shared

Additional Goal(s):

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

The evaluation process is not an end in itself, but rather the critical pivot point at which you make decisions on necessary revisions or improvements for your multiage classroom(s). You must also decide with whom you will share your findings. Failing to complete this step is analogous to assessing a student's academic needs in the classroom, then filing away the results without doing anything to improve and share the student's progress.

CHECKLIST 12: ✓ How Will Results of the Evaluation Process Be Used?

Directions: Place a check in the box that corresponds with your current status for each statement below. Use the chart on the next page to record how and with whom your results will be shared.

I/We have determined:	YES	NOT YET	COMMENTS
1) how frequently we will assess progress toward each goal			
2) how to refine or revise our multiage classroom(s) based on our ongoing assessment and evaluation			
3) with whom we will share the results of our ongoing evaluation process			
4) the person(s) responsible for sharing our findings			
5) how our evaluation information will be shared (e.g., newspaper, newsletter, parent meeting, teacher meeting, etc.)			
Additional goals for using and sharing evaluation results are:			
6)			
7)			

KEY:

Great! You have planned how the results of your evaluation process will be used and shared.

Answers to these statements are necessary for an effective evaluation process.

1 10

1 11

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CHECKLIST 12: ✓ How Will Results of the Evaluation Process Be Used?

Directions: This chart is a tool to be used with the checklist on the previous page. Write your plans for how your ongoing evaluation will be used and with whom you will share it.

Multiage Goals	Purpose of Evaluation: How Will the Results Be Used?	How Will the Results Be Shared?

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CHECKLIST 12: ✓

Directions: Assess how you will use and share the results of your findings, then respond.

1. I/We are satisfied with how we plan to use our findings: Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further planning for this part of the evaluation is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan to use and share our evaluation results. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

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CHECKLIST 13:✓

Putting It All Together: Assessing the Steps Toward a Successful Evaluation Process

Person(s) responding to this checklist:

Name(s): _____

Position: _____

Name of principal at time of evaluation: _____

_____ Date: _____

Rationale:

In checklists 10, 11, and 12, you assessed your goals with S.M.A.R.T. criteria, chose the sources of information to evaluate your goals, and determined how you will use and share your findings. This step helps you put it all together on a chart to create a holistic overview of your evaluation process. This checklist is a final proofreading of the steps you have taken toward implementing a successful multiage classroom.

Goal(s):

- Consider the steps for a successful evaluation plan
- Develop an effective evaluation plan for the multiage classroom

Additional Goal(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Possible Unintended Consequences of Not Doing This Step:

What happens when you don't evaluate? You have been working on this question throughout this book, but now what is needed is a project timeline. The activities in this checklist provide the "big picture" that will help you put everything together in your evaluation process. Without a holistic view of your evaluation process, it is difficult to see the interrelatedness and timeliness of all the different components.

CHECKLIST 13: ✓ Putting It All Together: Assessing the Steps Toward a Successful Evaluation Process

Directions: Examine the steps for a successful evaluation process listed in the checklist below. These steps were previously described in the introduction to Part Three. It is time to revisit them and assess your current status. Write a check in each box that best describes your current status with each statement. Use the chart on the next page to create a holistic view of your complete plan and timeline.

I/We have:	Yes	In Process	Not Yet	Expected Date for Completion
1) reviewed our goals for the multiage classroom.				
2) selected the goals we want to evaluate.				
3) selected our sources of data.				
4) developed an evaluation plan.				
5) collected data.				
6) analyzed the data.				
7) considered our progress toward goals and/or revisions.				

KEY:

Great! If you have checked this column, you are in an excellent position to make good decisions about your multiage classroom(s).

Review the checklists in Part Three to be sure you are on track.

Complete the checklists in Part Three to help you achieve these steps. If you have addressed these steps, obtain a progress report from the person responsible for completing the activity.

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CHECKLIST 13: ✓ What Are the Steps for a Successful Evaluation Process?

Directions: This chart will provide a holistic overview of the evaluation steps listed in the checklist on the previous page. Use it 1) "as is" to fill in your responses, 2) enlarge it to a greater, desirable size, or 3) create a spreadsheet to chart your complete plan.

Goal	Data Source	Person Responsible	Steps to Completion	Timeline	Who Needs to Know?
EXAMPLE 90% of parents will agree that the second year was less stressful for their child.	Parent Survey	School Secretary	1. Locate & duplicate survey 2. Send to parents with SASE 3. Collate results 4. Share with teachers	Send: 4/30 Return: 5/15	Teachers/Parents School Board

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CHECKLIST 13: ✓

Directions: Assess your progress to evaluate each goal. Where are the gaps, if any? What needs to be done? Consider these points, then respond below.

1. I/We are satisfied with the plan for our evaluation process: Yes ___ No ___ Somewhat ___

2. Further development of the plan is needed: Yes ___ No ___

Plan to address gaps or questions related to your evaluation plan. Include who will do which activities and the date by which activities are to be completed.

Journal Entry/Notes

PART FOUR: SUPPORT PAGES

- ✓ Contents and Purpose
- ✓ Multiage Glossary
- ✓ Sample Pages for Parents
- ✓ Parent/Teacher Questionnaires and Reproducibles
- ✓ References and Recommended Reading
- ✓ Biblio-Index

SUPPORT PAGES

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Welcome to the Support Pages! As you worked through the checklists and charts, you might have checked items that referred you to the "Support Pages." This section directs you to specific resources where you can obtain more information or read further about a specific topic or component concerning the multiage classroom. Some direct you to sources for specific information, and others are sample reproducible forms for you to use in your multiage evaluation process.

Included are reproducible sample surveys, letters, questionnaires, forms, and charts. Time is a precious resource, and these examples are provided to help you avoid starting everything from scratch. The samples are here for you to revise and use to meet your own needs.

Contents and Purpose

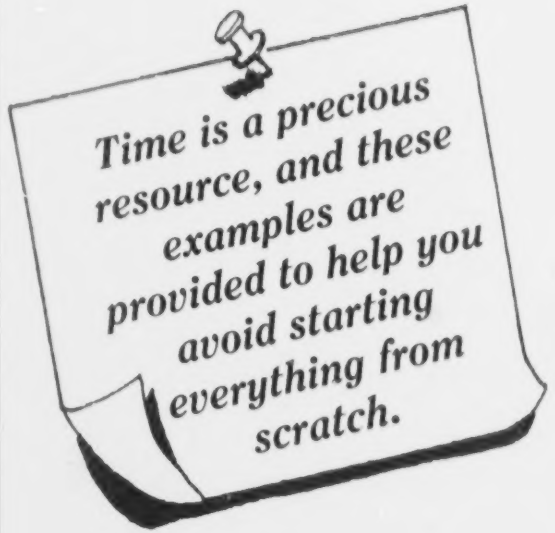
Glossary of Multiage Terms:
Use this to broaden your understanding of multiage terms.

Sample Parent Letter:
This introductory letter to multiage can be revised to accommodate your own situation.

Parent Questionnaire for Placement:
This form requests parental input to help in the student placement process. It provides an opportunity for parents to offer information about how their children learn. It does not, however, allow parents to choose a specific teacher.

Sign Up/Opt Out Form (English and Spanish):
This form provides a way for parents to request that their child be considered for placement in a multiage classroom. It also serves as an "insurance policy" to allow the parents or school to opt out of the multiage classroom if a more appropriate placement is in the best interest of a student.

Student Placement Plan and Chart:
This process will help you set up balanced classrooms for multiage, looping, and single year configurations. (Excerpt from *Looping Q&A*, pp. 86-89.)



Parental Involvement Assessment Tool:
This chart helps you assess the number and types of activities you use to involve parents in your school community.

Bilingual Surveys:

- Two-Year Multiage Survey for Parents (English and Spanish)
- Three-Year Multiage Survey for Parents (English and Spanish)
- Two- or Three-Year Multiage Survey for Teachers

These surveys can be revised or are ready to use as sources of information or data for your evaluation process.

Bibliography and Recommended Resources:

- Web Sites
- Videos and Study Kits
- Multiage Organizations and Conferences

Biblio-Index

MULTIAGE GLOSSARY

authentic assessment: Assessment that demonstrates a child's actual learning in the classroom. An authentic assessment tool, such as a student writing portfolio, documents classroom process and students' progress over time.

combination grade/split grade (sometimes called multigrade): Two or more distinct grades in one classroom that are taught as separate entities. Instruction and assessment are separate for each grade. Reasons for creating this configuration are generally not pedagogical, but rather out of economic necessity (due to low or uneven enrollment numbers or budget constraints). These are not considered true multiage configurations.

continuous progress: Students work at their individual learning rates. In a nongraded multiage school, there are no letter grades, retentions, or promotions. In today's typical multiage configuration, students progress toward academic goals over a two-or-more-year time period.

flexible grouping: Flexible groups are created to accommodate a diverse range of learners and interests in the classroom. These groups are designed for specific purposes and are usually temporary in nature, with a group disbanding or students leaving the group when a set goal has been reached. Students learn to work together for a variety of purposes, in a variety of settings, with a variety of learners. Examples of flexible groups include: skills, interest, cooperative, study, etc.

learning centers: Learning centers are designated places in the classroom where specific materials and activities are available to allow students opportunities to explore, practice, or extend their understanding of concepts and skills. Learning centers can be permanent, temporary, or portable in nature. They might be set up according to content areas, including math, reading, science, writing, listening, and social studies. Teachers might also arrange their classrooms into centers that include their daily routines, curriculum, and interests. Used as an instructional and management strategy, learning centers allow teachers to meet with an individual or a small group (flexible group), while other students in the classroom are engaged in preplanned, purposeful learning.

looping: Looping is a multiyear instructional design that places a single grade of students together for two or more years with the same teacher(s) for the purpose of building long-term relationships and gaining more effective use of instructional time.

multiage: Multiage is a multiyear instructional design that blends two or more grades together into a single classroom of learners with the same teacher(s) for two or more years. The multiage philosophy focuses on looking at children in more of a "real-world" view, by creating a class with a wide range of ages. Peer teaching (tutoring), long-term relationships, and continuous progress practices are attainable goals in a multiage classroom.

multiyear: The multiyear classroom is where students are taught by the same teacher(s) for two or more years. Looping and multiage classrooms are both examples of multiyear configurations. (Not to be confused with combination grade/split grade configurations.)

nongraded (also ungraded): Nongraded schooling is an idealistic philosophy in today's graded world of schooling. It is a design that focuses on continuous progress learning for individual students and eliminates graded practices such as grade level designations, comparative reporting (A, B, C, D, F grades), tracking, retention, promotion, social promotion, group standardized tests, and age-/grade-specific standards.

peer tutoring: This practice capitalizes on the belief that to teach another is the highest form of understanding. It is practiced by educators who believe everyone in the classroom both teaches and learns. The student doing the peer tutoring is not meant to be a "teacher's aide," but rather someone who can assist another child's learning while reinforcing his or her own.

summer bridge: In a multiage or looping classroom, students learn together with the same teacher(s) for two or more years. In both of these configurations, the summer offers opportunities for students to participate in a variety of activities and studies that will bridge the two school years (see *The Looping Handbook*, 1995).

school-within-a-school: When a large school reconfigures itself into smaller units within the school, a school-within-a-school is created. In this type of setting, schools typically separated into areas according to grade level designation might reconfigure into teams or communities of multiple grade groupings. For example, a traditional K-4 school, with four sections of each grade, might be assigned to five specific grade areas. If they change to a school-within-a-school, they would create four learning teams or communities, each containing K-4 classrooms. Students would remain in their learning communities from kindergarten through fourth grade. Most schools create this configuration to facilitate long-term relationships among students, parents, and teachers. Each school-within-a-school can also address diversity in teaching philosophies. One community might use a multiage instructional design, another looping, and another single year, single grade classrooms.

team teaching: When two or more teachers plan together and share the responsibility of teaching the same group of students, they are team teaching. They might be located in the same room or teach their own class in an adjacent or nearby room, teaming for some or all of the instruction.

three-way or student-led conferences: When the student, teacher, and parent all meet at the same time to discuss the student's progress and set future goals, the process is called three-way conferencing. This method is used to encourage the parent to become an active partner in the student's education. A three-way conference with the student actually leading the session is known as a student-led conference.

Sample Letter to Parents: Multiage Information Meeting

September 25

Dear Parents,

Have you ever wished your children could remain with their teacher for more than one year? Did you ever stop to consider that your child has friends and relationships with people from different age groups outside of school, yet in school they are placed only with students in their own age group? During the past year, we have been investigating an educational concept called "multiage." This means students from two or more grades are intentionally blended together and taught by the same teacher(s) for two or three consecutive years. Multiage classrooms allow children to have stronger relationships with their classmates and teacher(s). Students also have a wider age range of relationships and have opportunities to learn essential curriculum over a smoother two-year period, rather than two separate years.

There are compelling reasons to consider multiage grouping. We would like to share these with you at monthly evening meetings, beginning on October 1 (Wednesday evening) at 7:00 p.m. in the school library. We also want to listen to any questions and concerns you might have about multiage classrooms.

At our elementary school, we are pleased that we have a number of teachers who are presently studying this concept and are interested in implementing multiage classrooms beginning next school year.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss multiage. If you cannot attend, please contact me to set up a more convenient time.

Sincerely,

Principal

Sample Parent Questionnaire* for Student Placement

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The staff is about to begin the student placement process for next year. We devote our expertise and time toward creating classroom assignments that ensure balance for optimal teaching and learning, and invite you to share your thoughts — impressions so valuable to us — about your child's needs. If you would like to participate in this process, please return your questionnaire no later than April 1.

Thanks so much for your help! We look forward to reading your comments.

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Check all the statements that are true about your child:

___1. likes frequent change
___2. prefers to work alone
___3. likes teacher direction
___4. has difficulty with transitions
___5. likes predictability
___6. prefers group work
___7. likes to be independent
___8. adapts easily to change

Please write any other information (not confidential) you would like to share about your child:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Parent's name Date

*Survey adapted from questionnaire in *How to Change to a Nongraded School* by Madeline Hunter. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development ©1992

SIGN UP AND "OPT OUT" FORM

A REPRODUCIBLE FORM

My child's name: _____

My child's grade next fall: _____

I would like my child to be considered for placement in a multiage classroom, beginning the _____ school year.
(year)

OPT OUT CLAUSE:

I understand that if my child is selected to be in a multiage placement, he/she will have the same teacher(s) for two or more consecutive school years and will work in a classroom where students from two or more grades are blended into one community of learners.

I also understand that at the end of the first school year, either the school or I can choose a more appropriate placement for my child without consequence.

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

A REPRODUCIBLE FORM

FORMULARIO DE FIRMAR O REHUSIR

Nombre de mi hijo/a: _____

Grado de mi hijo/a el próximo otoño: _____

Quisiera que se considere colocar a mi hijo/a en una clase de varias edades, empezando con el año escolar _____.

CLÁUSULA DE REHUSIR:

Comprendo que si mi hijo/a se seleccione para la clase de varias edades, él/ella tendrá el/la mismo/a maestro/a por dos o más años escolares consecutivos y trabajará en una clase con estudiantes de dos o más grados mesclados en una sola comunidad de apréndices.

También comprendo que al fin del año escolar, o la escuela o yo pueda escoger una clase más apropriada para mi hijc/a sin consecuencia.

_____

Firma del padre o tutor Fecha

Q.

What is a good student selection process for a looping classroom?

A. First, you need to ask yourself some questions. Who is presently involved in making student selection decisions? Do you have guidelines in place? Will looping require changing those guidelines?

If you don't have guidelines, or if they need to be revised or updated, a team of teachers and administrators should be formed to work on them.

Here are some considerations in drawing up student placement guidelines:

- Make sure you balance your classroom in terms of student population (see pp. 69-70).
- If teachers spend time in the spring placing children in balanced classes, make sure that those placements are not changed over the summer, so that teachers don't return to completely different groups.
- Address the placement of new and incoming students to maintain balanced classrooms.
- Establish a "getting to know you" period of time in the fall of the first year. This is especially helpful for new, incoming second-year students and allows for proactive changes.
- Have an "opting-out" policy in place at the end of the first year to allow parents the choice of removing their child from the looping classroom if they're unsatisfied with the arrangement.

Once they're completed, it is important that your guidelines appear in writing and are known and understood by teachers and parents.

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Excerpted from *Looping Q&A: 72 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions* by Jim Grant, Bob Johnson, and Ivy Richardson. Peterborough, NH: CSB, 1997.

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Q. How do I make sure I have a balanced student population for my looping classroom?

A. Children learn from each other; those with lower abilities stretch to learn from the gifted and high achievers; students without disabilities learn kindness, compassion, and caring from those who do; children with behavioral problems, or who lack positive discipline training at home, learn to behave from positive peer modeling.

Balance is a good thing! When selecting children for your looping classroom, make sure you balance your student population in terms of gender, race, socio-economic and social-emotional factors, and cognitive abilities. Children with special physical and cognitive needs should be included, but be careful not to overload your class with special-needs students. (The proportion of special-needs kids in your class should be the same as in the general population of your school.)

You should also consider the developmental levels of students when balancing the classroom. Make sure a range of developmental stages is represented; then be sure your curriculum plans accommodate all of these different levels. It's especially important not to have too many developmentally young children in your classroom.

In the spring, you might use the visual organizer on the following page to begin your placement process. Any process of gathering input from parents should already have taken place. The teachers from grade levels that are sending and receiving students would meet to begin the process. Suggestions for using the placement grid are:

1. Have a grid for each teacher who will be receiving students.
2. Teachers sending students should write each student's name on a Post-it™ note (yellow for boys, blue for girls) and add any additional comments that might be helpful in the placement process.
3. Teachers sending students should place each student's name on the area of the grid that best reflects his or her level of social/emotional and cognitive development.
4. The grids are placed side-by-side, which allows for quick surveys for equity, balance, and potential difficulties.

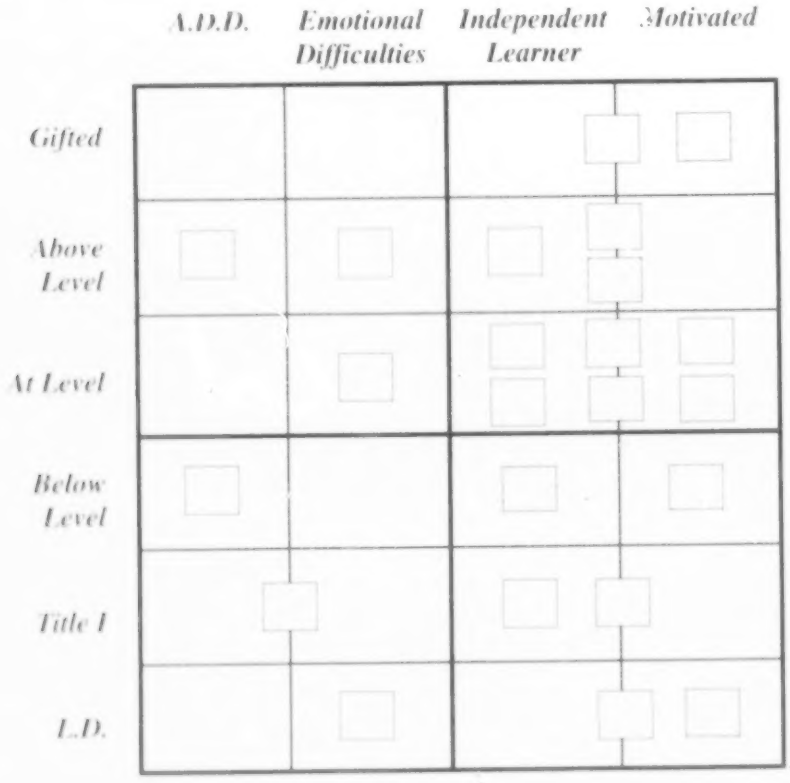
Excerpted from *Looping Q&A: 72 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions* by Jim Grant, Bob Johnson, and Ivy Richardson. Peterborough, NH: CSB, 1997.

After reviewing the grids and agreeing on student placement, class lists can be made.

Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

Year: _____



Depending on the demographics of your community, it may not be possible to balance the classroom in all respects; a community may be of predominantly one culture, or there may happen to be many children in the community with special needs. But spending time creating the best possible balance in your classroom, based on the population you have, will help you to optimize your instruction.

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Excerpted from *Looping Q&A: 72 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions* by Jim Grant, Bob Johnson, and Ivy Richardson. Peterborough, NH: CSR, 1997

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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ASSESSMENT

Directions: Use this chart to help you assess, improve, and increase current parent involvement in your school.

STRATEGY	HAPPENING	NOT HAPPENING	COULD HAPPEN	NOT LIKELY
1. Parent/Teacher Partnership:				
3-Way Conferences				
Student Contracts				
Summer Bridge (Summer Learning Activities)				
Other				
2. Home/School Partnership:				
Parent/Teacher Organization				
Volunteer Program				
Family Night				
Other				
3. Home/School Communication:				
Homework Hotline				
Newsletters				
School Web Site/Page				
Parent Handbook				
Surveys/Questionnaires				
Other				
Comments:				

MULTIAGE SURVEY FOR PARENTS for the Two-Year Multiage Classroom

Directions: Please circle **A** for **Agree**, **D** for **Disagree**, or **U** for **Unsure** in response to these questions about your child's experience in a multiage classroom.

My child enjoyed being with the same teacher(s) for two years.	A	D	U
My child enjoyed being in a multiage classroom for two years.	A	D	U
I feel my child learned to cooperate with a wide range of students because of the experience in the two-year multiage classroom.	A	D	U
My child was challenged to do his/her personal best in the multiage setting.	A	D	U
Starting the second year was less stressful for my child.	A	D	U
I had a better understanding of my child's education after two years with the same teacher(s).	A	D	U
At the beginning of the second year, my child understood what was expected of him/her.	A	D	U
The teacher(s) better understood my child's strengths and needs the second year.	A	D	U
The summer between the two school years seemed less stressful for my child, as he/she knew he/she would have the same teacher(s) again.	A	D	U
I felt more comfortable communicating with my child's teacher(s) the second year.	A	D	U
If I had it to do over, I would choose a two-year multiage classroom placement for my child.	A	D	U
I would recommend a two-year multiage placement to other parents.	A	D	U

Comments:

REPRODUCIBLE

ENCUESTA DE PADRES para la clase de varias edades (Dos Años)

Por favor circunda "**Sí**", **si esté de acuerdo**, "**No**", si **no**, o "**I**" para **incierto/a al responder** a estas preguntas sobre su hijo/a en una clase de varias edades (dos años).

Mi hijo/a disfrutó de estar con el/la mismo/a maestro/a por 2 años.	Sí	No	I
Mi hijo/a disfrutó de estar en una clase de varias edades por 2 años.	Sí	No	I
Sentí que mi hijo/a aprendía a cooperar con una gran variedad de estudiantes por la experiencia de estar en la clase de varias edades.	Sí	No	I
Mi hijo/a fue desafiado/a a hacer lo mejor posible en el ambiente de varias edades.	Sí	No	I
El comienzo del segundo año le dió menos estrés a mi hijo/a.	Sí	No	I
Llegué a comprender mejor la educación de mi hijo/a después de 2 años con el/la mismo/a maestro/a.	Sí	No	I
Al principio del segundo año, mi hijo/a entendió lo que se le esperaba.	Sí	No	I
Los maestros comprendieron mejor las abilidades y necesidades de mi hijo/a en el segundo año.	Sí	No	I
El verano entre los 2 años escolares pareció producir menos estrés para mi hijo/a al saber que el/ella tendría de nuevo el/la mismo/a maestro/a.	Sí	No	I
Sentí mas cómodo/a comunicando con el/la maestro/a de mi hijo/a en el segundo año.	Sí	No	I
Si tuviera que hacerlo de nuevo, escogería una clase de varias edades (dos años).	Sí	No	I
Recomendaría a otros padres una clase de varias edades.	Sí	No	I

Comentarios:

REPRODUCIBLE

MULTIAGE SURVEY FOR PARENTS for the Three-Year Multiage Classroom

Directions: Please circle **A** for **Agree**, **D** for **Disagree**, or **U** for **Unsure** in response to these questions about your child's experience in a three-year multiage classroom.

My child enjoyed being with the same teacher(s) for three years.	A	D	U
My child enjoyed being in a multiage classroom for three years.	A	D	U
I feel my child learned to cooperate with a wide range of students because of the experience in the three-year multiage classroom.	A	D	U
My child was challenged to do his/her personal best in the multiage setting.	A	D	U
Starting the second and third years were less stressful for my child.	A	D	U
I had a better understanding of my child's education after three years with the same teacher(s).	A	D	U
At the beginning of the second and third years, my child understood what was expected of him/her.	A	D	U
The teacher(s) better understood my child's strengths and needs the second year. This understanding grew the third year.	A	D	U
The summers between the school years seemed less stressful for my child, as he/she knew he/she would have the same teacher(s) again.	A	D	U
I felt more comfortable communicating with my child's teacher(s) the second year. I felt even more comfortable the third year.	A	D	U
If I had it to do over, I would choose a three-year multiage classroom for my child.	A	D	U
I would recommend a three-year multiage placement to other parents.	A	D	U

Comments:

REPRODUCIBLE

ENCUESTA DE PADRES para la clase de varias edades (Tres Años)

Por favor circunda "**Sí**", **si este de acuerdo**, "**No**", si **no**, o "**I**" para **incierto/a al responder** a estas preguntas sobre su hijo/a en una clase de varias edades (tres años).

Mi hijo/a disfrutó de estar con el/la mismo/a maestro/a por 3 años.	Sí	No	I
Mi hijo/a disfrutó de estar en una clase de varias edades por 3 años.	Sí	No	I
Sentí que mi hijo/a aprendió a cooperar con una gran variedad de estudiantes por la experiencia de estar en la clase de varias edades (tres años).	Sí	No	I
Mi hijo/a fue desafiado/a a hacer lo mejor posible en el ambiente de varias edades (tres años).	Sí	No	I
Los comienzos del segundo y del tercer año le dieron menos estrés a mi hijo/a.	Sí	No	I
Llegué a comprender mejor la educación de mi hijo/a después de 3 años con el/la mismo/a maestro/a.	Sí	No	I
Al principio del segundo y del tercer año, mi hijo/a entendió lo que se le esperaba.	Sí	No	I
Los maestros comprendieron mejor las abilidades y necesidades de mi hijo/a en el segundo año y aun más en el tercer año.	Sí	No	I
Los veranos entre los años escolares parecieron producir menos estrés para mi hijo/a al saber que el/ella tendría de nuevo el/la mismo/a maestro/a.	Sí	No	I
Sentí más cómodo/a comunicando con el/la maestro/a de mi hijo/a en el segundo año y aun más en el tercer año.	Sí	No	I
Si tuviera que hacerlo de nuevo, escogería una clase de varias edades (tres años).	Sí	No	I
Recomendaría a otros padres una clase de varias edades.	Sí	No	I

Comentarios:

REPRODUCIBLE

MULTIAGE SURVEY FOR TEACHERS

Directions: Please circle **A** for **Agree**, **D** for **Disagree**, or **U** for **Unsure** in response to these statements about teaching in a multiage classroom.

I believe that my teaching experiences in a multiage classroom—in comparison to my experiences in a one-year, single grade classroom—

resulted in creating a more caring classroom environment with improved student discipline.	A	D	U
allowed me a greater chance to know and understand my students, which helped me make better-informed decisions regarding their instructional and social/emotional needs.	A	D	U
gave me more time to teach in an integrated, continuous progress fashion.	A	D	U
reduced my level of anxiety and stress the second year with the students.	A	D	U

I believe by having two or more grades blended into one classroom of learners, the children

exhibited improved cooperative behaviors toward one another.	A	D	U
benefited from numerous opportunities for peer tutoring.	A	D	U
developed a wider age-range of friends.	A	D	U
became more independent and industrious in their studies.	A	D	U

Please Complete These Statements:

I teach in this multiage configuration: (Circle One) Two-Year Three-Year Other

My greatest benefit from teaching in a multiage classroom is/was

My greatest concern regarding teaching in a multiage classroom is/was

What would help me most as a teacher of a multiage class is

Comments: (Use back if needed)

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REPRODUCIBLE

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Study Kits

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Richardson, Irv. *Multi-Age Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997. ASCD Video and Facilitator's Guide

Audio-Visual Resources

The Looping Video with Char Forsten and Jim Grant. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs Books, 1998. Video

Pavelka, Pat. *Using Themes and Centers to Enhance Instruction*. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs Books, 1997. Video

Thompson, Ellen. *The Nuts and Bolts of Multiage Classrooms*. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs Books, 1994. Video (1 hour)

—. *A Day in a Multiage Classroom*. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs Books, 1994. Video (25 minutes)

Web Sites for Educators and Parents

ERIC: Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
http://ericps.ed.uiuc.edu

N.A.M.E.: The National Alliance of Multiage Educators shares a page on the Web with The Society For Developmental Education. Quarterly newsletter on multiage topics, book reviews, and information on conferences, books, and other multiage materials.
www.socdeved.com

North Dakota ICICLE Project (Internet Comprehensive Instructional and Curricular Resources for Educators): Comprehensive library of "reviewed" K-12 curriculum and instructional materials available on the Internet, which is organized by subject area, and includes links to most K-12 related news groups.
http://calvin.cc.ndsu.nodak.edu/wayne/icicle.index.html

teachernet: includes a bulletin board for multiage teachers.
www.teachernet.com

teachnet: a great site for all teachers, including multiage educators.
www.teachnet.com

Yahoo Education Resources: includes sections on educational theory and methods, K-12 resources, math and science education, and special education.
http://www.yahoo.com/Education/

Parent Resources

National Parent Information Network
http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents.html
http://ericps.uiuc.edu/npin/

National Parent Teacher Association
www.pta.org

Multiage Organizations

International Registry of Nongraded Schools (IRONS)
Robert H. Anderson, Co-Director (with Barbara N. Pavan)
PO Box 271669
Tampa, FL 33688-1699

Multiage Classroom Exchange
Teaching K-8
40 Richards Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06854

National Alliance of Multiage Educators (N.A.M.E.)
Ten Sharon Road, PO Box 577
Peterborough, NH 03458
1-603-924-9256
www.socdeved.com

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School Visitations or Classroom Observations

To find out where you can visit a multiage classroom or school near you, consider one of these contacts:

1. State Department of Education
2. Internet (See Web sites on pp. 82-83.)
3. College or university with teacher education programs
4. National Alliance of Multiage Educators (N.A.M.E.) (See description on p. 83.)

Sources of Data and Information

To help in your evaluation plan, consider these potential sources of data:

Existing School Sources:

1. Standardized test data
2. Student records
3. Student portfolios
4. Retention records
5. Referrals for discipline
6. Attendance records
7. Special Education referrals
8. Chapter I referrals

Questioning the Partipants:

1. Interviews
2. Surveys
3. Questionnaires

Other Sources of Information:

1. Observations
2. Journals
3. Performances
4. Checklists
5. Videotapes
6. Work samples

Professional Journals as Sources of Information

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development- *Educational Leadership*

NAESP- Principal

Education Week

Harvard Newsletter

Phi Delta Kappan

The School Administrator

Resources for Parent Involvement

1. Baskwill, Jane. *Parents and Teachers: Partners in Learning*. Toronto, Ontario: Scholastic, 1990.
2. Davies, Anne et al. *Together Is Better*. Winnipeg, Canada: Peguis Publishers, 1992. (Comprehensive book on three-way conferences among students, teachers, and parents.)
3. Ohle, Nancy and Lakin Morely. *How to Involve Parents in a Multicultural School*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1996.
4. Stenmark, Jean Kerr et al. *Family Math*. Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, 1986. (Terrific ideas for "family math night" activities at school.)

Web Sites:

The PTA
http://www.pta.org
Great site for parents and teachers wanting methods of working with parents. Contains lots of information on how parents can help their children learn.

U.S. Department of Education
http://www.ed.gov/pubs/pubdb.html
A database of U.S. Department of Education publications in ERIC. Offers great ideas for ways schools and parents can work together.

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BIBLIO-INDEX

This chart directs you to books that address specific multiage topics and practices identified in each column heading. The book is written for all levels except where noted. For a comprehensive list of recommended books and materials, see the bibliography.

	Terms & Definitions	Advantages	Disadvantages	Management & Discipline	Learning Centers	Instruction	Assessment	Grouping Variations
Multiage Q&A (Grant et al., 1996)	✔	✔	✔					
Our Best Advice (Grant et al., 1996)	✔	✔	✔					
Multiage Handbook (Grant et al., 1995)	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔		
Children at the Center (Miller, 1994)	✔	✔	✔					
Multi-age and More (Politano et al., 1994)				✔	✔	✔	✔	
Managing to Teach (Cummings, 1996)				✔	✔	✔	✔	
Creating & Managing Learning Centers (Ingraham, 1997) (Primary)				✔	✔	✔	✔	
A Teacher's Guide to Cooperative Discipline (Albert, 1989)				✔				
Creating the Multiage Classroom (Stone, 1996) (Primary)				✔	✔	✔	✔	
Wonderful Rooms Where Children Can Bloom (Feldman, 1997) (Primary)				✔	✔	✔		
The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher (Wong, 1998)				✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

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If you are interested in exploring, implementing, or evaluating multiage configurations, then this is the resource for you. Char Forsten, Jim Grant, and Irv Richardson have teamed up to create an exceptional hands-on, easy-to-use, almost entirely reproducible book.

The Multiage Evaluation Book, like its companion *The Looping Evaluation Book*, contains detailed checklists for the exploration, implementation, and evaluation of multiyear concepts. Substantiated by support pages, which include a comprehensive reading/Internet resource list, *The Multiage Evaluation Book* will appeal to all teachers, whether you are new to multiage concepts or have been teaching in a multiage classroom for years.

PART ONE— Exploring Multiage: This stage will help you understand what multiage is and isn't, the reasons for its implementation, and the kinds of instructional practices commonly associated with it.

PART TWO— Implementing Multiage: If you are preparing to start one or more multiage classrooms, this step is essential. If you are already implementing multiage practices, you should still respond to these checklist activities as part of your evaluation process. This stage will help you design, prepare for, and begin your multiage classroom.

PART THREE— Evaluating Multiage: Which components are working well? Which need revision? To best understand the impact your multiage program is having, you need to continually evaluate its progress. Evaluation is what will help you improve the necessary components of your multiage program.

PART FOUR— Support Pages: Teachers and administrators alike will value these wonderful support pages, complete with a multiage glossary, teacher questionnaires, sample parent questionnaires (in English and Spanish), recommended reading, and a biblio-index.

Important Features:

- **Checklists**: Checklists will help you answer those necessary and important questions before, during, and after you implement multiyear practices. Each checklist contains a name/date box in the top right hand corner so that the multiyear team can easily organize findings. Checklists also refer you to the appropriate support pages located in Part Four.
- **About This Book & How to Use This Book**: The authors provide a definition for multiage and explain the importance of the evaluation process. In addition, they take you step-by-step through a sample checklist and discuss the significance of potential findings.
- **Plan & Journal Entry/Notes**: Each checklist contains a page on which to draft a brief multiage plan and to take notes. This will help you stay organized and preserve findings for future reference by keeping everything on one page.

Crystal Springs
BOOKS

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